



# California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

## Consumer Advisory

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### **PUC CHECKLIST FOR HIRING A LIMOUSINE**

Spring is the time for proms, weddings, Mother's Day, and Father's Day, and if you're planning on hiring a limousine for your special occasion, the California Public Utilities Commission (PUC) wants your experience to be a good one.

The following are tips to follow before you hire a limousine:

- Call the PUC's Consumer Protection and Safety Division's Licensing Section at **1-800-877-8867** to check the qualifications of your prospective limousine company by obtaining the following: Insurance number; PUC permit number and permit status; any complaints filed against the company.
- Determine if there is a minimum charge. Many limousine companies charge per-hour, with a minimum number of hours, so they are assured a certain amount of income for each job.
- Determine whether the limousine company "farms out" jobs when it does not have enough equipment/drivers. Many limousine companies enter into contractual agreements with sub-carriers (other limo companies), who agree to provide the transportation for a share of the money received from the customer. Ensure that the sub-carrier is licensed by the PUC. Often a customer does not know about a sub-contracting arrangement until things go wrong and the customer is surprised that the vehicle is different than the one ordered, or the sub-carrier driver demands something the customer is not expecting.
- Keep your options open and shop around to find a limousine company in which you're most comfortable.

- Ask for a written agreement of the hiring terms. Although this is not required, it is good practice to have agreements in writing to ensure that you're on the same page with the limousine company. Some details to include on the written agreement include cost; deposit amount; refund policy; cancellation policy; driver tip policy; pick-up and drop-off locations and times; length of hiring time; emergency contact information for the limousine company in case you need the limousine to arrive earlier or later (include names, landline phone numbers, cell phone numbers, fax numbers, e-mail addresses, pager numbers); your expectations of the hiring agreement; limousine company's expectations of your responsibilities to adhering to the hiring agreement.
- Obtain and keep all receipts of any payment to the limousine company.
- Touch base with the vendor at least 24 hours before the date of your event to confirm any details.
- Arrange with the company to view the limousine that you will be hiring before the requested reservation time.

If you suspect that a limousine company is operating without a permit, or if you'd like to file a complaint against a company, please call the PUC's Passenger Complaint Hot Line at **1-800-894-9444**.

For more information about passenger carriers that the PUC regulates or other areas that the Commission regulates, please visit [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov).

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